

REMARKS

This paper and accompanying Request for Continued Examination are submitted in response to the final Office Action mailed on April 20, 2005 and having a shortened statutory response period ending on July 20, 2005. This paper is submitted within the statutory response period. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 02-1818.

Claims 46-71, 73-74, 76-89, and 131-134 are currently pending. Claims 72 and 75 have been canceled. Claims 1-45 were previously canceled and claims 90-130 were previously withdrawn. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this paper.

Claims 46-89 and 131-134 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 first paragraph for failing to comply with the written description requirement as the term "non-hydrolyzed fibrin network" was alleged to be not supported by the specification. This term has been removed from the present claims without narrowing the scope of the claims. Applicants respectfully request that the § 112 rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 46-49, 52-55, 60-66, 69, 72, 78-79, 81-83, 89 and 131-134 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,272,074 to Rubens (*Rubens*). Claims 46, 48-50, 52-53, 60-89 and 131-134 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,989,215 to Delmotte et al. (*Delmotte*). Claims 56-59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being obvious over *Delmotte*. Claims 50 and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being obvious over *Rubens* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,744,515 to Clapper (*Clapper*). Claims 73-77 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being obvious over *Rubens* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,824,080 to Lamuraglia (*Lamuraglia*) and U.S. Patent No. 5,242,792 to Rudolph et al. (*Rudolph*). Claims 56-59, 67-68, and 70-71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being obvious over *Rubens*. Claims 84-88 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being obvious over *Rubens* in view of *Delmotte*.

Rubens and *Delmotte* do not disclose or suggest a fibrin network in contact with a porous support wherein the fibrin extends into at least one pore as recited in the present claims. Rather, *Rubens* discloses a substrate upon which denatured fibrinogen is adsorbed. The fibrinogen is subsequently polymerized to form a fibrin coating on the substrate. *Rubens*, col. 3 lines 22-25. *Rubens*, however has no disclosure directed to fibrin extending into the substrate pores.

Delmotte discloses a fibrin film composed of two layers, one layer of which has a closed structure. *Delmotte*, col. 6 lines 25-34. *Delmotte*, however, has no disclosure that the fibrin extends into pores of the structure.

Clapper does not disclose a fibrin network in direct contact with a porous substrate as recited in the present claims. Rather, *Clapper* discloses a biomaterial that bears an immobilized adhesion molecule for the promotion of endothelialization. *Clapper*, col. 6 lines 49-54. Wholly absent from *Clapper* is any disclosure regarding fibrin. In addition, *Clapper* discloses that the adhesion molecule requires a linking group, namely a latent reactive linking group, in order to bond with the surface of the biomaterial. *Clapper*, col. 10 line 62 through col. 12 line 50. Thus, it is the linking group, not the adhesion molecule, that directly contacts the biomaterial surface. As *Clapper* 1) is silent regarding fibrin and 2) the *Clapper* coated article requires a linking group to link the adhesion molecule to the substrate, *Clapper* fails to disclose or suggest a fibrin network in direct contact with a support face as recited in the present claims.

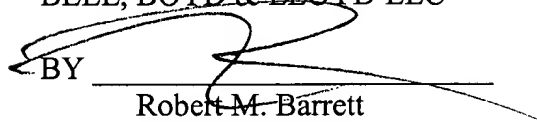
Rudolph and *Lamuraglia* fail to fulfill the deficiencies of *Rubens*, *Delmotte* and *Clapper* as neither *Rudolph* nor *Lamuraglia* has any disclosure remotely related to fibrin, let alone a fibrin network in direct contact with a support face. *Rudolph* discloses a composition used in red blood cell lyophilization. *Rudolph*, col. 3 lines 28-40. *Lamuraglia* discloses a photodynamic technique for preparing arterial grafts. *Lamuraglia*, col. 4 line 66 through col. 5 line 5. As no combination of *Rubens*, *Delmotte*, *Clapper*, *Lamuraglia*, and *Rudolph* teaches or remotely suggests the claimed subject matter, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are novel and nonobvious in view of the references cited above.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified patent application is now in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of same.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 
Robert M. Barrett
Reg. No. 30,142
P.O. Box 1135
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1135
Phone: (312) 807-4204

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